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Automotive News

December 30, 1985

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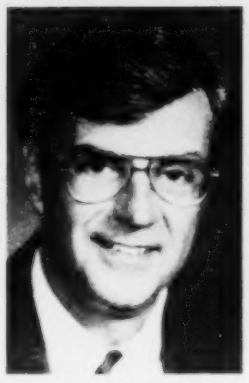
60th year—$45 per year, $1.00 per copy

Werner Breitschwerdt

The Mercedes-Benz chairman led a venerable company—1986 is its centennial—in keeping up with rapid technology changes in the industry.

John Z. DeLorean

A former GM executive acquitted on drug charges, but facing prosecution on his car companies' finances. He's planning another new car.



William Hoglund

As Saturn president, he won an innovative labor pact and led a much-ballyhooed site search involving hundreds of suitors—ending in Tennessee.

Lee Iacocca

Disclaiming interest in a presidential campaign, he continued rebuilding Chrysler, reorganizing it and diversifying in aviation and finance.

Sergio Pininfarina

Famed Italian designer joined Cadillac in unique 1986 Allante concept—involving bodies built in Turin and flown to Detroit for assembly.

Top Ten news-makers of 1985

Ronald Reagan

The President greatly influenced the world industry by not asking Japan to renew quotas on exports to the U.S., forcing tougher competition.

Roger B. Smith

Innovative GM chairman led diversification of industry with a "lulu"—the purchase of Hughes Aircraft—plus moves into finance and technology.

Tatsuro Toyoda

President of NUMMI brought stability to GM-Toyota joint-venture, improved worker attitudes on quality and successfully built large-volume Nova.

Bob White

Canadian UAW president made clean break from U.S. union, established independence and negotiated new contract with Chrysler.

Chung Se Yung

Hyundai president masterminded strategy that underpriced Japan, built a U.S. dealer network and prepared for the 1986 Excel entry.

Top story: Big 3 buying binge

By John K. Teahen Jr.
Senior Editor

The Big Three went on a buying spree in 1985, and their string of acquisitions captured first place in the Automotive News editorial staff's 33rd annual Story of the Year poll.

It was no penny-ante game. The auto firms shelled out hundreds of millions of dollars for each of their new toys. In the case of General Motors and Hughes Aircraft, the tab was $5 billion. And the purchases were all nonautomotive.

Second place went to GM's Saturn—the small-car project itself and the unrestrained hoopla that surrounded the selection of a plant site.

The No. 3 story was the increasing "Japanization" of the U.S. and Canadian auto industry with the announcement of several new plants and the expansion of some that are already operating.

Wide World Photos

GM's Smith and Hughes Aircraft's Puckett—a big day

Japan took fourth place as well. That story was the end of the U.S.-Japan Voluntary Restraint Agreement, the increase in the Japanese Government's export quota and Japan's threat to toss all restrictions out the window next March.

In fifth place was 1985's car-truck sales record of 15.6 million units. A few points behind was the brief, but welcome, domestic-car sales boom touched off by last summer's finance-rate incentives.

GM's $5 billion purchase of Hughes Aircraft led the Big Three "buy" list for 1985, but Chrysler Corp. and Ford Motor Co. also shelled out a bundle. Chrysler paid almost $1.2 billion for three companies, and Ford spent more than $800 million for two major properties.

And none of the acquisitions was in the automotive field. They were in the realm of technology, finance and—for Ford—farm implements. The auto giants are diversifying; they are building hedges against the cyclical nature of their own business.

GM built its empire by acquiring auto-related companies. It is extending its empire by reaching beyond that field. The 1984 purchase of Electronic Data Systems was a start. Hughes was another step.

In addition, General Motors Acceptance Corp. became a power in the mortgage business. Last March, it purchased the rights to service the $11 billion mortgage portfolio of Norwest Corp., Minneapolis. A week later, GMAC bought the Colonial Group of CoreStates Financial Corp. Colonial's mortgage portfolio is $7.4 billion.

No purchase price was mentioned, but one does not finance such ventures out of petty cash. On second thought, maybe GM *does* finance such ventures out of petty cash.

Chrysler also made large purchases in the field of high tech and high finance this year. Big-

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GM, Ford try 7.9 loans to fight slump

By Michelle Krebs
Financial Editor

As predicted, the new year will be ushered in with financing incentives offered by all of the Big Three auto makers.

General Motors was first to announce last week that it would offer 7.9-percent financing on nearly half of its product line.

Ford Motor Co. matched GM's 7.9-percent financing, but on fewer models. Ford already had a 7.9-percent program in place on 1985 and 1986 Escort, Lynx and EXP models; that program will expire Jan. 2.

Both GM's and Ford's incentive plans began Dec. 26 and will run to Feb. 22.

Chrysler Corp. has had an 8.6-percent financing and rebate program in place on certain models since Thanksgiving. A Chrysler spokesman said the company expects to make no change in that program, which will run into the beginning of the year. No termination date has been set.

GM said it was offering the incentives to give the company a fast sales start in 1986. It further said it was emphasizing its 4-cylinder, mid-size models to improve the company's Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE).

The announcement of GM's incentive program had been expected. GM was heading into 1986 with a million cars in inventory and an aggressive first-quarter production schedule. Analysts had predicted either a cutback in the production schedule or marketing incentives.

According to the latest Automotive News analysis, GM had an 86-day supply of cars on Dec. 1, well above the desired 60 days.

The domestic makers as a group opened December with a 78-day supply, the highest level in more than three years.

In addition, sales have been sluggish since the start of the 1986 model year on Oct. 1. In every 10-day period since then, domestic-

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Taurus-Sable send GM back to drawing board

Ford Motor Co.'s Taurus and Sable models look like they will be a successful challenge to existing imported and domestic models and also to General Motors' biggest new-car program ever—GM10, which is still two years away from introduction.

GM insiders say that although GM can't make major changes now, it will tinker with its GM10 cars to enhance the styling in the wake of the introduction of the Ford Taurus and Mercury Sable.

The GM10 program is an $8 billion revamp of GM's mid-size car line involving up to seven North American assembly plants. The cars will be sold under the nameplates of four of GM's divi-

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With a steady share for Chrysler

Slower sales in 1986 predicted by Iacocca

By Mary Connelly
Detroit Reporter

Chrysler Corp. Chairman Lee A. Iacocca predicted U.S. sales of cars and trucks will drop to 14.9 million units in 1986 from this year's expected record of 15.6 million.

Iacocca said he anticipates sales of 10.5 million cars and 4.4 million trucks in 1986.

Chrysler's 1986 estimate is in line with those of economists at General Motors and Ford Motor Co., who predict 1986 sales of 15.0 million and 14.8 million, respectively.

Chrysler anticipates its U.S. sales will exceed 2 million vehicles in 1986, Iacocca said.

The company will retain its 12-percent market share in this country in 1986, he said, although he also predicted that imports and their U.S. assembly operations will gain 40 percent of the market next year.

Chrysler increased its U.S. market share to 12.2 percent in 1985 from 11.6 percent in 1984, he said.

This year Chrysler expects to post sales of 2,092,300 cars and trucks in the U.S. and Canada, 271,200 more than in 1984. The gain is primarily due to increased production of the Plymouth Voyager and Dodge Caravan minivans and of the Chrysler LeBaron GTS and Dodge Lancer, Iacocca said.

In 1986, Chrysler will have the biggest new-model launch in its history, Iacocca said. It will introduce the P-car small compacts, Dodge Shadow and Plymouth Sundance; the Dodge Dakota midsized pickup, and the sporty coupe codenamed J-car.

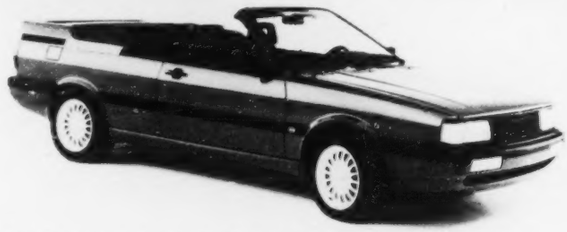
"These new vehicles are aimed at market segments in which Chrysler currently does not compete, so they should enable us to keep our plants running at full capacity in 1986," Iacocca said.

Describing Chrysler as a "combat-ready corporation" that has exceeded every goal of its five-year recovery plan following its brush with bankruptcy, Iacocca said the company will invest $3.4 billion in new products in 1986, more than it has ever spent in any one year.

He warned that in 1986 the auto industry could be at the crossroads with regard to foreign sourcing.

"If in 1986 there is no further resolution of the tax and currency advantages enjoyed by the imports, the auto industry will become increasingly dominated by foreign sourcing," Iacocca said. "In this regard, 1986 could be a watershed year for the auto industry."

Chrysler's Dodge division was ranked fourth and the Plymouth division sixth in U.S. vehicle sales in 1985, Iacocca said. Those are up from 1980 when Dodge was eighth and Chrysler ninth, he said.



Audi concept car tests convertible waters

Audi of America, Inc., is unveiling a new concept car during the 1986 auto show season. Called the Audi GT Cabrio, it is a convertible based on Audi's Coupe GT model. It was created by ASC, Inc., Southgate, Mich., and is designed to test the potential acceptance of an Audi cabriolet. The GT Cabrio is powered by a 2.22-liter, 110-HP, 5-cylinder fuel-injected engine.

Finishing strong, expecting gains in '86

VWoA is counting its blessings

TROY, Mich.—In a year-end statement, Volkswagen of America President Noel Phillips said that unit sales of VW and Audi vehicles are more than 20 percent higher than in 1984 and that the company expects to be profitable for the third consecutive year.

Further sales gains and increased profitability are anticipated for VWoA in 1986, despite the expected softening of sales in the U.S. car market from 10.7-11 million vehicles to 10.25-10.5 million, Phillips said.

"The two franchises together will sell close to 300,000 units in 1985, a significant increase over the 243,000 units which we sold in 1984," he said. "During 1986, we expect this number to rise to approximately 325,000 units, which would give us a solid 3 percent share of the anticipated American market."

Accounting for his favorable projections, he said, are "very strong performances by . . . VW and Audi during this year, and the introduction of the very latest automotive technology into both car lines for 1986."

The 25 percent jump in Volkswagen sales this year over last is due to the new Golf and to the Jetta, which is the best-selling European car in America, said Phillips. "Audi, at the same time, is finishing 1985 with another record year," he said.

"We are the leading importer of European cars in the U.S. by a wide margin, and we shall remain so during the year ahead," Phillips said.

For 1986, the Audi 5000 series has the Quattro's all-wheel-drive along with ABS braking and double-sided zinc-coating on all sheet metal. It is the first mass-production car in the industry with those features, VWoA said.

In addition, for 1986 the Volkswagen Vanagon Syncro and Quantum Syncro wagons will have all-wheel-drive for the first time.

Phillips said that 1986 will mark the first full year that both the Audi and Volkswagen franchises will be operating independently, which will significantly affect their growth in the U.S.

Looking farther ahead, he said that the introduction of an entry-level car in 1987 would further strengthen VWoA's position.

Toyota sets goal: 10 pct. of world market by 1990s

TOKYO.—Toyota Motor Corp. plans to seize 10 percent of the world's auto market by the 1990s, according to the Japan Economic Journal.

Within the company, the concept is called "Global 10," the newspaper said.

It added that the plan was put into full operation with the announcement by Toyota that it planned to build assembly plants in the U.S. and Canada.

The paper said that because local production could engender top-heavy supplies, higher production costs and counter-moves by North American makers, Toyota is "certain to face rough waters ahead."

Despite optimistic talk at the U.S. plant dedication, some Toyota executives called plans for the new plant a "very important move which could sway our corporate fortune," the newspaper said.

It pointed out that in Japan, Toyota has the advantage of a kanban system, good manufacturing location, amicable industrial relations and cooperative parts suppliers.

It is doubtful if all of those factors will exist in North America, "where Toyota has definitely to face harsher competition than in Japan and will have to make further cost cuts and maintain better quality control," the newspaper said.

It quoted an unnamed Toyota executive as saying, "We just cannot bring our family-like auto parts makers to America to make cars."

The newspaper said that all of the Japanese makers, before they made their moves in North America, knew that production would be costlier than exporting there. But because of growing U.S.-Japan trade friction, they decided they could compete with American makers on price and that the U.S. market still had room to grow.

But those factors have changed, the paper said. Cost competitiveness is bound to deteriorate, it said, because of high wages and depreciation costs. Furthermore, it said, U.S. makers have been adopting the highly efficient Japanese production systems and have started buying good-quality parts from Japanese suppliers.

Jeep prices up $205 to $247 on three lines

SOUTHFIELD, Mich.—American Motors will boost the prices of its 1986 Jeep line an average of $157, or 1.2 percent, as of Jan. 2.

The increases will be added to the prices of early 1986 models, which were substantially above end-of-1985 prices.

According to AMC, Jeep Cherokee prices will be increased an average of $213, Wagoneer models an average of $247 and Comanche pickup trucks an average of $205.

The price of the base Cherokee, a two-door, two-wheel-drive version, will rise 3.6 percent from $9,599 to $9,945. The base Wagoneer price will climb 1.7 percent from $13,784 to $14,024. At the end of the 1985 model year, base prices were $9,195 for the Cherokee and $13,427 for the Wagoneer.

Base price for a 1986 Comanche pickup was $6,999 before the $205 increase.

Early in December, AMC announced a price increase of $225 for its soon-to-be discontinued Jeep CJ-7. Sales of the Jeep line through November were 15.1 percent above year-earlier figures.

$100,000 Chrysler gift helps Detroit's needy

DETROIT—Eleven Detroit-area community organizations have received grants ranging from $5,000 to $20,000 from Chrysler Corp. to provide those in need with food and shelter.

Chrysler made a donation of $100,000 to the Mayor's Emergency Relief Fund in Detroit.

Automotive News names Peabody to editorial post

Edward J. Peabody has joined Automotive News as assistant industry editor.

He moves to Automotive News from another Crain Communications, Inc., publication, AutoWeek. He had been managing editor there since May, 1985, after having served as assistant managing editor for more than a year.

Edward J. Peabody

Peabody is a 1983 graduate of Wayne State University in Detroit, with a bachelor's degree in journalism and in Honors English. He currently is a master's candidate at Michigan State University.

Peabody's primary assignment will be to work with Industry Editor Al Fleming on editorial planning and production of Automotive News special issues and special sections.

"We are pleased to announce the addition of Ed Peabody to our staff," said Automotive News Editor Andrew R. McGill. "We are certain that his experience and skills will contribute to the publication's tradition of editorial excellence."

$500 million modernization for Chrysler truck plant

WARREN, Mich.—Chrysler Corp. has announced a $500 million modernization project at its Dodge City truck assembly plant, which will begin producing the new mid-size Dodge Dakota pickup in mid-April.

Production of current full-size Dodge pickups will resume at the plant in mid-March, following the expansion and renovation.

About 3,100 hourly employes were laid off and production was suspended Dec. 20 due to the changeover. The remaining 600 hourly and 500 salaried employes remain on the job.

The Dodge City modernization will strengthen Chrysler's position in the expanding pickup truck market, said Harold G. Jones, plant manager.

"When we reach full production on two shifts, total units in the system will more than triple, and our maximum annual capacity will increase to 257,000 units, a gain of 33,000," he said.

New, high-efficiency assembly systems and expansions will increase capacity, Jones said.

"In three short months, Dodge City will become an integrated high-tech truck manufacturing operation that will be world class in all aspects," he said.

The number of robots in the plant will climb from two to 154, the company said.

"The body shop will have 104 robots, primarily in welding, and our paint operations will have 44, including Chrysler's first robotic body sealing operation," Jones said.

In addition, 744 computers ranging from micros to mainframes will operate and monitor equipment throughout the plant.

The expansion will add more than a million square feet of floor space, bringing the total plant area to 2.7 million square feet.

The largest expansion involved the acquisition of 44.4 acres of land for construction of a "state-of-the-art" paint facility, the company said. The new paint operation will have five miles of conveyor lines.

Total conveyor length throughout the plant will double, extending to more than 11 miles, according to the company.

A 13-week training program for more than 300 skilled trades people has begun.

Import-car sales in Japan placed at 50,000 for year

TOKYO.—Sales of imported cars in Japan are estimated at 50,000 for 1985 and are expected to reach 55,000 in 1986, according to the Japan Automobile Importers Assn.

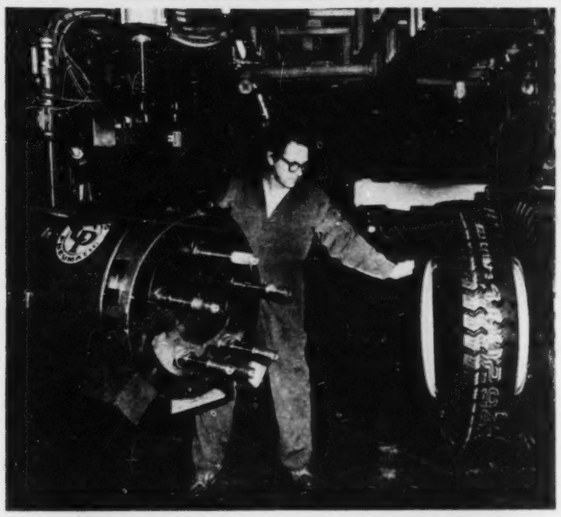
Those would be the two highest totals since the record of 60,161 in 1979.

In the U.S., imported-car sales are estimated at 2.8 million for 1985.

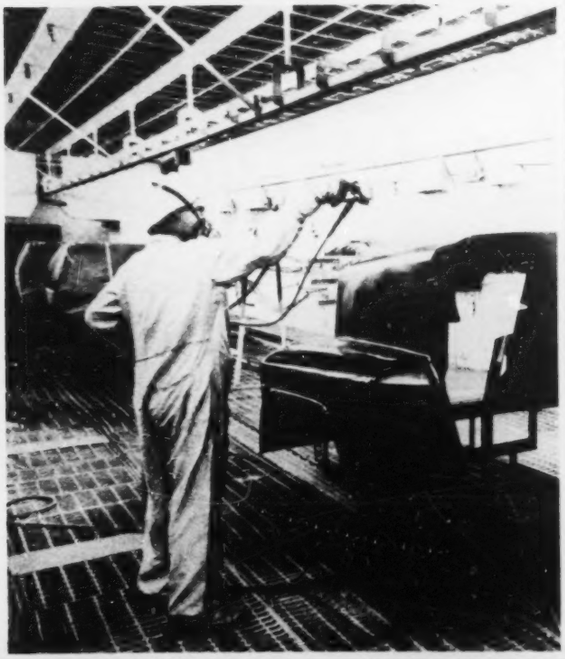
According to JAIA, brisk sales of European cars helped push the total to 45,267 through November, a 21.3 percent increase over the same period in 1984. In the Dec. 1-19 period, sales totaled 2,294, which was 2,439 units short of the 50,000 goal.

JAIA said the upward trend in sales was due primarily to sales of West German cars, which recorded a gain of 36 percent in the January-November period.

However, the association noted that sales of American-produced cars slumped to 1,673 during the period, one-tenth of the record of 6,739 set in 1979.



Employe involvement has improved assembly procedures at Ford's Kentucky truck plant. Multi-lug drive tools, top, suggested by employes, speed assembly and eliminate wheel wobble. Spray booth improvements boost quality, save money and have earned some employes a bonus, above. Hand-picked technicians at the Kentucky Truck Equipment Center, below, modify trucks to the customer's specifications. This phase of the operation has grown to encompass 20 percent of all trucks built at the plant.



October and 10 months are highest ever

More registration peaks

By Joseph Bohn
Truck Editor

October truck registrations set a record for the month, and 10-month registrations reached an alltime high.

Heavy-duty truck registrations declined in October, however, as an increase in Class 7 vehicles failed to offset the dip in Class 8.

For the 10-month period, heavy-duty registrations clung to an 11.3 percent lead over last.

During October, the industry registered 403,788 trucks, up from 349,807 a year earlier, according to R.L. Polk & Co.

Light-duty registrations of 379,238 were up from 325,274 a year ago.

Within the light-duty segment, Class 1 truck registrations of 261,747 were up from 187,465; Class 2 registrations of 114,534 were off from 135,545, and Class 3 registrations of 2,957 were up from 2,264 a year ago.

October's medium-duty count of 6,200 was up slightly from 5,857 a year ago.

Within the medium segment, Class 4 registrations of 86 were up from 72; Class 5's tally of 400 was off from 691, and Class 6's total of 5,714 was up from 5,094 a year earlier.

Heavy-duty registrations totaled 18,350, slightly below 18,676 a year earlier.

Within the heavy segment, Class 7 tallies of 7,181 were up from 6,185 a year earlier, while Class 8 registrations of 11,169 were off from 12,491 last year.

For the 10-month period, the industry registered 3,887,589 trucks, up 16.2 percent from 3,344,769 in like 1984.

Light-duty registrations of 3,654,754 were up from 3,136,652 in the 1984 period.

Within the light-truck segment, Class 1 registrations of 2,509,883 were up from 1,802,551; Class 2 registrations of 1,113,755 were off from 1,303,203, and Class 3 registrations of 31,116 were up from 30,898.

Medium-duty truck registrations of 54,317 were up from 47,693 a year earlier.

Within the medium segment, Class 4 registrations of 760 were up from 596 last year; Class 5 registrations of 5,454 were up from 3,290, and Class 6 tallies of 48,103 were up from 43,807 a year earlier.

Heavy-duty registrations of 178,518 were up from 160,424 for the first 10 months of last year.

Within the heavy segment, Class 7 registrations of 64,844 were up from 54,986 last year, while Class 8 registrations of 113,674 were up from 105,438.

International continued to build its lead over Ford as the top heavy-truck marketer in October, while Mack strengthened its grip on third place over GMC.

Ford, though, had a dramatic 10-month increase of 1.8 percentage points in market share in the heavy segment, while IH was still 1.1 percentage points off its market penetration of a year ago.

Behind Ford, Mack showed the largest (0.8 percentage-point) gain in share, followed by White with a 0.6-percentage-point gain.

Biggest loser in the heavy-duty sweepstakes for 10 months was Kenworth, whose market share was off 1.7 percentage points from last year.

U.S. TRUCK REGISTRATIONS

TEN MONTHS, 1985 VS. 1984★

Make	10 mos., 1985	Percent Share of '85 market	10 mos., 1984	Percent Share of '84 market	Pct. pt. Change, '85-'84
Chevrolet	1,046,464	26.92	910,046	27.21	−0.29
Ford	1,025,931	26.39	958,873	28.67	−2.28
Dodge	426,738	10.98	347,733	10.40	+0.58
GMC	291,009	7.49	253,389	7.58	−0.09
Jeep	137,594	3.54	118,556	3.54	−0.00
Plymouth	87,004	2.24	64,738	1.93	+0.31
International	60,468	1.56	54,633	1.63	−0.07
Mack	24,438	0.63	20,650	0.62	+0.01
Freightliner	15,156	0.39	13,201	0.39	+0.00
Peterbilt	10,151	0.26	10,353	0.31	−0.05
Kenworth	9,505	0.24	11,248	0.34	−0.10
White	7,096	0.18	5,388	0.16	+0.02
Mercedes	3,689	0.09	1,983	0.06	+0.03
Volvo	1,954	0.05	1,567	0.05	.....
Autocar	1,453	0.04	1,060	0.03	+0.01
Western Star	952	0.02	546	0.02	.....
Miscellaneous☆	737,987	18.98	570,805	17.06	+1.92
TOTALS	3,887,589	100.00	3,344,769	100.00	.....

★—All truck registrations in Oklahoma, and in 1984, New York, compiled from manufacturers' sales records.
☆—Miscellaneous includes imports, Crane Carrier, Oshkosh, FWD, Hendrickson, etc.

U.S. HEAVY-DUTY REGISTRATIONS

TEN MONTHS, 1985 VS. 1984★

Make	10 mos., 1985	Percent Share of '85 market	10 mos., 1984	Percent Share of '84 market	Pct. pt. Change, '85-'84
International	38,909	21.80	36,653	22.85	−1.05
Ford	37,562	21.04	30,914	19.27	+1.77
GMC	21,643	12.12	21,545	13.43	−1.31
Mack	21,268	11.91	17,790	11.09	+0.82
Freightliner	15,156	8.49	13,201	8.23	+0.26
Peterbilt	10,151	5.69	10,353	6.45	−0.76
Kenworth	9,505	5.32	11,248	7.01	−1.69
Chevrolet	9,294	5.22	8,292	5.17	+0.05
White	7,096	3.97	5,388	3.36	+0.61
Volvo	1,954	1.09	1,567	0.98	+0.11
Mercedes-Benz	1,597	0.89	744	0.46	+0.43
Autocar	1,453	0.82	1,060	0.66	+0.16
Western Star	952	0.53	546	0.34	+0.19
Miscellaneous	1,978	1.11	1,123	0.70	+0.41
TOTALS	178,518	100.00	160,424	100.00	.....

★—Group 7 and 8 trucks only.

Program embraces electronics, polymers, ceramics

GM studies big-truck technology

CHICAGO.—General Motors is studying new ceramics and polymers, alternative fuel engines, simplified controls and new developments in electronics for possible use on its large trucks, according to GM President F. James McDonald.

McDonald outlined GM's future directions during an address at the SAE Truck and Bus Show here.

He said GM is aiming at better fuel economy, versatility, reliability, durability, faster and easier maintenance and better counsel at the time of purchase.

Electronics for medium and heavy truck engines and transmissions are already a reality, McDonald pointed out, citing automatic transmission and engine controls now in use.

"Only a few short years ago, people were talking about applying electronics on engines and transmissions for mediums and heavies," he said. "Today, the talk has been replaced by action, specifically with automatic transmissions and engine controls now on the road."

McDonald called electronic controls "one of the most significant product improvements in the history of big power."

He ticked off a series of electronics-based advances for the industry, including automated communication between engine and transmission for more efficient power selection and fuel economy; exchange of information between drivers and terminal management via on-board computers and a permanent switch to integrated electronic controls.

"Internal tests and data from the road have already shown that the Detroit Diesel electronic engine control system delivers fuel economy improvements of 5-8 percent and up to 10 percent in some fleet tests," McDonald told the meeting.

He added that replacing mechanical controls with electronics will make it more feasible to comply with upcoming emission regulations without substantial mileage losses.

Electronics, he said, also provide pinpoint control of engine timing and fuel flow, thereby improving cold starts.

McDonald also cited coming advances in ceramics, but added, "I don't see an early introduction of major ceramic engine parts.

"Instead, first uses will probably include ceramic coatings, as well as cam followers, valve guides and piston domes," he said. "But wider usage will certainly follow."

McDonald added that "exotic materials", such as strong, lightweight plastics will continue to replace other materials in cabs. And he sees carbon fibers and similar compounds on the horizon for high-stress components.

AUTOMOTIVE
WORLD NEWS

Fiat will cross old borders with new Croma

By Jean-Jacques Renaux

We must regard the whole of Europe as our domestic market, and get out of the Italian borders." With those words, Ernest Ferrari, Fiat Auto's sales manager for Europe, underscored plans for an export bid of tremendous importance to the Italian auto maker's future.

Important, because although Fiat does compete closely with Volkswagen-Audi Group and Ford for the European sales lead, Fiat doesn't really run in the same race. Unlike Ford and VAG, Fiat relies almost solely on its home market. According to the company's own figures for the first nine months of 1985, Fiat and Lancia held about 53 percent of the Italian market, but accounted for less than 5 percent of sales in the rest of Europe. And exports during that period accounted for only about 30 percent of production.

Another problem: Fiat's product line leans strongly toward the low end of the market. In fact, about 75 percent of all Fiats and Lancias sold were the tiny Uno, Panda, Autobianchi A112 and Lancia Y10 models. The subcompact Fiat Ritmo/Regata and Lancia Delta/Prisma accounted for most of the balance, with the larger models taking only 2 percent of sales.

Now that's all changing.

Now there's the Fiat Croma.

The Croma is a slightly downsized version of the luxury midsize Lancia Thema, and Fiat Auto is banking on it to win the hearts and wallets of Europe. But not right away. Croma will have to begin its conquest in Italy, next summer, before wooing the rest of the continent. And, unless Fiat forms a joint venture company with a U.S. auto maker real soon, don't expect to see any Cromas scooting around your own neighborhood.

The Croma, launched in Italy just this month, shares more than a few parts with its sister ship, the Thema. Not only is it built in the same robotized Mirafiori plant as the Thema, but it also has the same floorpan (with a 104.7-inch wheelbase), and has such Thema features as front-wheel-drive, four-wheel independent suspension and four-wheel disc brakes (with anti-lock optional).

Croma customers will be able to choose any of six newly developed four-cylinder gas or diesel engines of 1.6 to 2.5 liters displacement — or the stealthy turbocharged version that reportedly is good for 155 horsepower and 130 mph.

One DOHC 2.0-liter version features a new electronic fuel-injection system developed jointly by Magneti Marelli and Weber, two subsidiaries of the Fiat group. The system, called IAW, has a microprocessor to control port injection and ignition at the same time. Another version of the Croma is called CHT (controlled high turbulence). Its 2.0-liter DOHC engine is fitted with a variable induction system developed in collaboration with Yamaha of Japan. Fiat says CHT improves the engine's torque at low revs and reduces fuel consumption by at least 20 percent.

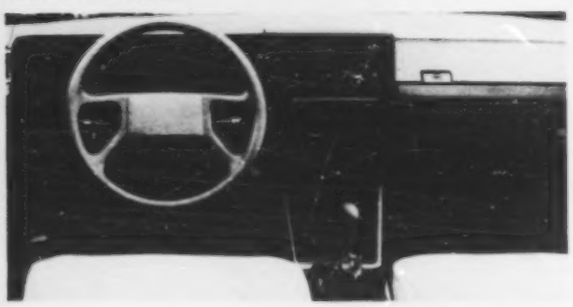
All Cromas will use a five-speed manual transmission, with a three-speed optional in one version. Power steering, tilt wheel, central door locking and power front windows are standard on most versions, and the option list includes: auto-levelling rear suspension, air conditioning, electrically heated front seats and mirrors and six-way power adjusting seats.

Price was not available as of press time, but Ferrari says, "We are not going to try to buy the market with this car. We are looking for profitability first. Yet the productivity gains we made in recent years should allow for competitive pricing of the Croma."

With such luxurious features and a competitive price, Croma is expected by Fiat to bridge the gap between the upper-medium class of compact sedans and the executive class, thus covering a market segment that Fiat estimates at more than a million cars per year. That's about 11 percent of total European sales.

"We know it will be a difficult task to recapture some market share in that segment," says Ferrari, "but with the quality of the product range we now have in our hands, it's up to us to win the place that we deserve on the European market. If we don't succeed, we'll have no excuses." ■

Fiat Croma CHT (above and below): The engine (controlled high turbulence) was developed with help from Yamaha. The CHT is one of six Croma versions.



Here's what's up at Fiat for '86

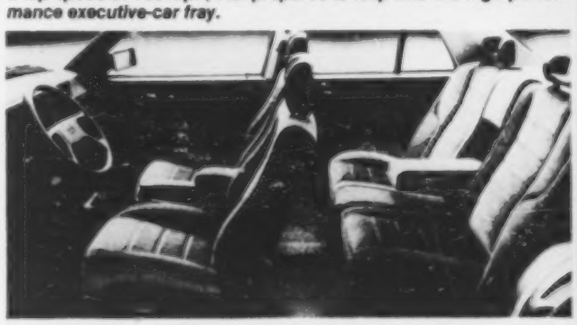
The Croma isn't the only thing keeping Fiat Auto busy.

In January the company will introduce a restyled Panda, powered by a 34-hp, 760-cc version of the FIRE four-cylinder. Toward the end of the year a 1.1-liter FIRE engine will be added, to complement the present 1.0-liter.

The Ferrari V-8-powered Lancia Thema — thought to be the most expensive Lancia ever — could be unveiled at the Geneva auto show in March. The 150-mph luxury sedan likely won't have four-wheel-drive, at least initially. However, the little Y10 will have 4wd by early summer, as will the revised Prisma and Delta models.

Turbodiesel versions of the Fiat Uno (70 hp, in excess of 100 mph) and Strada (80 hp) will be unveiled. The Strada will get a facelift — to freshen it up until the arrival of the all-new Type 2 at the end of 1987. ■

Fiat Croma Turbo i.e. (above and below): With 155 horsepower and a top speed of 130 mph, Fiat prepares to leap into the high-performance executive-car fray.



OVERSEAS PRODUCTION

FRANCE
Cars

	9 mos. 1985	9 mos. 1984
Peugeot SA	925,678	933,798
Citroen	341,833	350,277
Peugeot	561,873	526,531
Talbot	21,973	56,890
Renault	989,420	1,045,902
Total	1,915,099	1,979,700

Vans, trucks, buses

CBM	38	23
Iveco-Unic	73	3,440
Peugeot SA	118,890	85,837
Citroen	54,262	22,124
Peugeot	60,516	54,280
Talbot	4,112	9,433
Renault	158,412	157,832
Sovam	68	66
Total	277,481	247,198
Total vehicles	2,192,580	2,226,898

UNITED KINGDOM
Cars

	9 mos. 1985	9 mos. 1984
BL	370,174	289,946
Austin Rover	360,345	281,842
Range Rover	9,829	8,104
Carbodies	1,260	1,138
Ford	232,069	230,835
Jaguar	28,114	24,527
Lotus	616	624
Panther	84	333
Peugeot-Talbot	47,203	67,734
Reliant	680	82
Rolls-Royce	1,778	1,497
TVR	335	290
Vauxhall	114,504	85,893
Others	459	456
Total	797,276	703,355

Vans, trucks, buses

Bedford	45,825	36,591
BL	68,907	51,485
Austin Rover	19,850	11,978
Freight Rover	14,627	12,714
Land Rover	22,761	18,590
Leyland Veh.	11,669	8,203
ERF	1,545	1,306
Foden	336	545
Ford	82,025	77,873
Hestair Dennis	609	689
Metro-Cammell-Weymann	332	373
Reliant	47	148
Renault	3,917	3,250
Seddon Atkinson	1,303	1,274
Others	137	176
Total	204,983	173,719
Total vehicles	1,002,259	877,074

SPAIN
Cars

	9 mos. 1985	9 mos. 1984
Ford	184,557	197,699
General Motors	202,043	186,733
Peugeot SA	120,184	135,428
Citroen	51,829	75,083
Talbot	68,355	60,345
Renault	162,674	165,615
Seat	217,648	169,075
Total	887,106	854,550

Vans, trucks, buses

Enasa	6,507	6,769
Ford	8,207	5,773
PSA-Citroen	45,759	11,102
Land Rover	14,903	7,829
Mercedes-Benz	7,557	6,390
Motor Iberica	18,785	13,085
Renault	18,984	19,580
Seat	10,611	16,673
Setra	174	160
Total	131,487	87,361
Total vehicles	1,018,593	941,911

JAPAN
Cars

	9 mos. 1985	9 mos. 1984
Daihatsu	120,189	125,639
Fuji	182,270	181,603
Honda	679,336	629,166
Isuzu	151,915	56,312
Mazda	591,353	591,248
Mitsubishi	411,846	400,404
Nissan	1,392,756	1,397,020
Suzuki	166,861	117,584
Toyota	1,905,858	1,789,861
Total	5,602,384	5,288,837

Vans, trucks, buses

Daihatsu	303,621	296,917
Fuji	241,842	222,055
Hino	50,818	45,375
Honda	112,559	113,654
Isuzu	277,284	245,037
Mazda	282,003	279,524
Mitsubishi	426,297	403,193
Nissan	498,578	477,869
Nissan Diesel	28,059	28,206
Suzuki	397,074	375,817
Toyota	829,950	748,434
Others	613	490
Total	3,448,698	3,236,571
Total vehicles	9,051,082	8,525,408

AUTOMOTIVE
WORLD NEWS

VW's Golf tops '85 European production list

Six models stand well ahead of the rest of the pack in 1985 Western European automobile production.

Preliminary reports indicate Volkswagen Golf was No. 1 in production during calendar 1985, followed in order by Opel Kadett/Vauxhall Astra, Fiat Uno, Peugeot 205, Renault 5 and Ford Escort.

Golf is being produced at a daily rate of 2,000 at VW's main Wolfsburg factory in West Germany. Another 700 daily at the Brussels plant and 150 Cabriolet and Caddy models boost the total to 2,850. If Jetta, the sedan derivative, is included, daily output jumps to 3,750.

Opel Kadett and Fiat Uno are next with daily rates between 2,500 and 2,600. Appeal of the Uno, particularly in Italy, has sent output running ahead of the level planned when the car was introduced nearly three years ago.

Kadett is selling strongly in all markets except West Germany, where buyers prefer the conservative design of Golf to the aero-look Kadett. Kadett production rates include the recently introduced sedan version and those assembled under the Vauxhall label.

At 2,350 a day, Peugeot 205 volume is more than double that of any previous model made by the French firm.

Renault's new series R5 is back among the big shooters, although at 2,200 daily it has yet to reach levels of the old R5 in its heyday.

Ford Escort rates run from 2,000 and 2,200 daily. The level has been higher; but considering the model's age, it is respectable. Arrival of the face-lifted Escort next spring is likely to intensify interest in the model, resulting in higher production schedules.

A common theme among all popular models is that they fall into one of two categories: superminis like Uno, 205 and R5; or lower-medium hatchbacks like Golf, Kadett and Escort.

The second tier of volume leaders is well behind the pacesetters. Included are Ford Fiesta (1,550 daily), Ford Sierra (1,500), Opel Ascona/Vauxhall Cavalier (1,400) and Renault 11 (1,300).

As compiled by Automotive Industry Data, the following were Western Europe's top-selling nameplates in the first half of calendar 1985 (unit sales and market shares are shown):

(1) VW Golf/Jetta (368,848 units/6.6 percent market share); (2) Fiat Uno (285,279/5.1); (3) Ford Escort/Orion (279,743/5.0); (4) GM Kadett/Astra (264,521/4.7); (5) Peugeot 205 (228,308/4.1); (6) Renault 9/11 (225,577/4.0); (7) Renault 5 (220,391/3.9); (8) Ford Fiesta (177,600/3.2); (9) GM Ascona/Cavalier (164,469/2.9); (10) Fiat Ritmo/Regata (164,-015/2.9). ■

OVERSEAS REGISTRATIONS

UNITED KINGDOM
Cars

	11 mos. 1985	11 mos. 1984
Alfa Romeo	2,989	4,042
Austin Rover	313,529	301,390
BMW	32,486	24,976
Daihatsu	4,377	4,647
Fiat Auto	54,916	48,216
Ford	455,589	469,225
FSO	5,775	5,249
GM-Vauxhall	291,799	271,507
Honda	17,924	17,809
Hyundai	4,979	4,760
Jaguar	7,765	7,273
Lada	14,390	14,579
Lotus	542	520
Mazda	16,371	16,887
Mercedes-Benz	17,725	14,092
Mitsubishi	11,199	10,210
Nissan	102,919	98,844
Panther	54	232
Peugeot SA	97,000	91,033
Citroen	26,498	24,015
Peugeot/Talbot	70,502	67,018
Range Rover	3,209	2,942
Reliant	613	101
Renault	68,014	57,255
Rolls-Royce	686	600
Saab	7,970	8,465
Skoda	9,426	10,607
Subaru	3,437	2,792
Suzuki	3,754	3,197
Toyota	34,008	31,714
VW-Audi Group	101,037	94,311
Audi	19,321	19,293
Volkswagen	81,716	75,018
Volvo	57,129	57,097
Zastava	7,623	5,828
Others	4,436	4,004
Total	1,753,670	1,684,404

SWEDEN
Cars

	11 mos. 1985	11 mos. 1984
Alfa Romeo	961	979
BMW	4,009	3,822
Daihatsu	1,393	981
Fiat Auto	6,802	6,343
Ford	26,826	24,149
GM-Opel	25,524	19,600
Honda	3,276	3,250
Lada	1,469	1,528
Mazda	11,124	10,212
Mercedes-Benz	9,460	5,477
Mitsubishi	2,315	1,671
Nissan	7,807	7,194
Peugeot SA	6,597	6,909
Citroen	2,861	3,152
Peugeot/Talbot	3,736	3,757
Porsche	433	280
Renault	2,489	2,376
Saab	28,588	29,833
Skoda	320	269
Suzuki	546	9
Toyota	11,019	8,152
VW-Audi Group	29,659	24,202
Volvo	65,321	56,797
Others	78	55
Total	243,755	211,869

WEST GERMANY
Cars

	10 mos. 1985	10 mos. 1984
Alfa Romeo	7,036	10,795
Austin Rover	5,422	5,425
Bertone	366	716
BMW	125,786	138,229
Daihatsu	7,248	5,719
Fiat Auto	89,912	95,223
Ford	215,447	251,000
GM-Opel	315,449	342,424
Honda	32,724	34,307
Isuzu	3,255	2,447
Jaguar	2,045	1,583
Lada	6,952	7,460
Mazda	56,193	57,398
Mercedes-Benz	237,939	201,106
Mitsubishi	39,032	39,031
Nissan	55,882	52,151
Peugeot SA	83,616	85,648
Citroen	32,093	33,595
Peugeot/Talbot	51,523	52,053
Pininfarina	920	657
Porsche	10,296	9,837
Range Rover	637	611
Renault	67,858	76,022
Saab	2,750	3,266
Seat	3,759	4,253
Skoda	2,071	1,763
Subaru	8,839	5,853
Suzuki	15,511	12,554
Toyota	52,666	45,454
VW-Audi Group	582,371	578,102
Audi	113,362	125,839
Volkswagen	469,009	452,263
Volvo	11,578	13,063
Others	1,985	1,381
Total	2,045,545	2,083,478

AUSTRIA
Cars

	10 mos. 1985	10 mos. 1984
Alfa Romeo	1 906	2,304
BMW	6,854	7,342
Daihatsu	681	658
Fiat Auto	12,351	13,558
Ford	22,012	19,563
GM-Opel	29,816	23,589
Honda	4,323	3,764
Lada	1,480	1,280
Mazda	18,851	19,107
Mercedes-Benz	8,143	6,056
Mitsubishi	4,445	4,155
Nissan	11,077	9,562
Peugeot SA	14,154	12,915
Citroen	5,965	5,541
Peugeot/Talbot	8,189	7,374
Porsche	435	418
Renault	9,324	9,090
Saab	304	378
Seat	1,104	662
Skoda	1,036	1,000
Subaru	3,041	1,902
Suzuki	1,194	1,176
Toyota	10,985	8,378
VW-Audi Group	47,386	35,693
Audi	9,396	6,644
Volkswagen	37,990	29,049
Volvo	3,143	3,044
Others	498	319
Total	214,507	186,918

DENMARK
Cars

	10 mos. 1985	10 mos. 1984
Alfa Romeo	356	237
Austin Rover	300	350
BMW	3,019	2,163
Dacia	666	791
Daihatsu	2,444	1,661
Fiat Auto	6,513	6,625
Ford	21,013	20,168
FSO	1,644	1,116
GM-Opel	22,673	16,322
Honda	1,682	1,241
Lada	3,166	3,641
Mazda	12,096	10,815
Mercedes-Benz	963	747
Mitsubishi	2,416	1,524
Nissan	7,010	6,417
Peugeot SA	8,315	8,081
Citroen	5,542	5,058
Peugeot/Talbot	2,773	3,023
Renault	1,100	557
Saab	1,462	1,495
Seat	530	0
Skoda	3,423	6,140
Subaru	180	151
Suzuki	443	91
Toyota	16,577	13,279
Trabant	25	87
VW-Audi Group	9,834	7,943
Audi	711	451
Volkswagen	9,123	7,492
Volvo	5,415	4,841
Wartburg	1,071	825
Zastava	1,532	673
Others	36	36
Total	135,904	118,342

ITALY
Cars (sales)

	9 mos. 1985	9 mos. 1984
Alfa Romeo	89,014	93,673
Austin Rover	17,855	17,225
BMW	16,974	22,405
Fiat Auto	710,300	687,143
Fiat	582,122	580,174
Lancia/ Autobianchi	128,178	106,969
Ford	53,959	55,055
GM-Opel	43,395	41,190
Innocenti	11,597	13,555
Mercedes-Benz	15,496	10,415
Peugeot SA	93,235	85,669
Citroen	49,418	46,444
Peugeot/Talbot	43,817	39,225
Renault	140,377	113,656
Seat	28,783	23,896
VW-Audi Group	111,701	64,676
Audi	14,287	11,616
Volkswagen	97,414	53,060
Volvo	13,625	16,431
Others	15,273	13,156
Total	1,361,584	1,258,145

THE NETHERLANDS
Cars

	9 mos. 1985	9 mos. 1984
Alfa Romeo	3,115	3,707
Austin Rover	4,632	5,018
BMW	11,227	11,201
Dacia	101	25
Daihatsu	3,748	3,623
Fiat Auto	27,262	32,371
Ford	46,694	46,632
FSO	210	113
GM-Opel	75,879	59,649
Honda	10,074	11,207
Hyundai	1,108	2,183
Jaguar	336	259
Lada	5,871	5,733
Mazda	12,986	14,405
Mercedes-Benz	10,140	7,523
Mitsubishi	10,753	11,067
Nissan	19,172	18,521
Peugeot SA	39,923	40,380
Citroen	20,183	19,053
Peugeot/Talbot	19,740	21,327
Porsche	203	148
Renault	24,348	21,379
Saab	1,954	2,636
Seat	6,001	5,203
Skoda	2,435	2,983
Subaru	2,596	2,347
Suzuki	9,837	8,988
Toyota	19,361	15,783
VW-Audi Group	37,923	35,890
Volvo	20,931	18,966
Zastava	649	923
Total	410,553	384,818

SWITZERLAND
Cars

	9 mos. 1985	9 mos. 1984
Alfa Romeo	5,062	6,412
Austin Rover	868	1,119
BMW	8,743	10,221
Daihatsu	950	1,065
Fiat Auto	17,367	18,736
Ford	16,904	18,899
GM-Opel	28,204	29,649
Honda	6,266	6,887
Isuzu	409	432
Jaguar	354	346
Mazda	6,115	7,236
Mercedes-Benz	5,077	4,268
Mitsubishi	6,162	6,742
Nissan	8,716	8,342
Peugeot SA	17,860	19,035
Citroen	6,950	8,405
Peugeot/Talbot	10,910	10,630
Porsche	1,116	1,140
Puch	117	105
Range Rover	894	609
Renault	13,432	12,048
Saab	933	1,017
Seat	1,398	0
Skoda	80	192
Subaru	7,820	5,233
Suzuki	3,047	2,933
Toyota	13,308	13,988
VW-Audi Group	34,254	33,344
Audi	10,929	8,242
Volkswagen	23,325	25,102
Volvo	3,864	4,852
Others	84	77
Total	209,404	214,927

NORWAY
Cars

	9 mos. 1985	9 mos. 1984
Alfa Romeo	167	55
BMW	2,963	1,650
Daihatsu	1,038	586
Fiat Auto	4,798	3,939
Ford	16,600	12,195
GM-Opel	15,779	9,458
Honda	2,980	2,150
Isuzu	119	9
Lada	1,971	2,000
Mazda	9,749	9,083
Mercedes-Benz	2,001	1,331
Mitsubishi	4,066	3,005
Nissan	7,332	4,386
Peugeot SA	5,737	4,971
Citroen	1,863	1,612
Peugeot/Talbot	3,874	3,359
Renault	790	325
Saab	1,827	1,789
Skoda	481	396
Subaru	1,812	806
Suzuki	191	17
Toyota	12,664	7,020
VW-Audi Group	13,534	8,132
Audi	2,788	1,542
Volkswagen	10,746	6,590
Volvo	8,297	6,115
Others	82	174
Total	114 978	79,592

IRELAND
Cars

	9 mos. 1985	9 mos. 1984
Alfa Romeo	142	286
Austin Rover	3,311	2,701
BMW	436	351
Daihatsu	396	6
Fiat Auto	2,642	3,971
Ford	9,818	10,823
GM-Opel	6,932	7,144
Honda	552	2
Isuzu	52	0
Jaguar	26	10
Lada	29	0
Mazda	1,091	1,018
Mercedes-Benz	332	265
Mitsubishi	609	0
Nissan	4,943	4,428
Peugeot SA	1,632	2,258
Renault	3,798	4,290
Saab	147	175
Skoda	118	0
Subaru	70	0
Suzuki	345	0
Toyota	9,244	8,018
VW-Audi Group	3,956	2,492
Volvo	941	800
Others	449	391
Total	52,011	49,429

JAPAN
Cars

	9 mos. 1985	9 mos. 1984
Daihatsu	73,234	81,204
Fuji	59,837	64,411
Honda	212,071	180,161
Isuzu	32,668	32,221
Mazda	139,014	161,935
Mitsubishi	132,200	151,033
Nissan	607,896	620,722
Suzuki	139,014	57,222
Toyota	977,587	937,435
Imports (all)	37,829	31,481
Total	2,323,990	2,317,825

Vans, trucks, buses

Daihatsu	248,502	225,366
Fuji	168,574	159,554
Hino	31,187	31,482
Honda	100,050	104,575
Isuzu	90,611	90,743
Mazda	115,628	118,142
Mitsubishi	267,135	247,950
Nissan	204,974	209,131
Nissan Diesel	16,645	16,884
Suzuki	306,749	280,073
Toyota	260,948	262,058
Imports (all)	128	132
Total	1,811,131	1,746,090
Total vehicles	4,135,121	4,063,915

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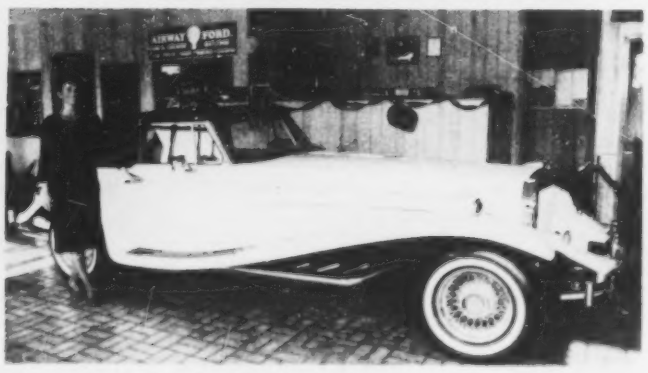

Airway Ford gets Clenet

Clenet Coachworks has added Airway Ford, Inc., Chicago, to its dealer roster. Shown with a limited edition Asha Series III is Carol Lann, marketing representative for Airway Ford. The handcrafted, steel-bodied Asha Series III convertible is priced at $82,500.

Guptill adds marketing to sales duties at AMC

By Richard Johnson
Detroit Reporter

After realigning its top officers on Dec. 13, American Motors followed up last week by promoting Peter Guptill to vice president—North American sales and marketing.

Guptill had been North American sales vice president.

In an interview with Automotive News last week, Guptill, 43, said he will be responsible for "the entire marketing effort," including advertising, merchandising and parts and services.

Those functions had previously reported directly to Executive Vice President Joseph Cappy, who 10 days ago was elevated to chief operating officer.

Along with Guptill's promotion, AMC announced two additional sales and marketing appointments last week. Martin R. Levine was named general manager—marketing and Samuel L. Tucker was appointed general manager—U.S. sales.

Guptill had been vice president—North American sales since June, 1985, when Cappy was promoted to executive vice president for operations. Guptill, who had been vice president, U.S. sales, took on Canadian sales at that time.

Guptill joined AMC in 1971 after three years with Ford Motor Co. He served as manager of AMC's Dallas, Los Angeles and Chicago zones and moved the AMC headquarters in 1979 as director of Renault integration.

In 1980, Guptill was appointed director of sales operations. He became Western regional manager in 1981, general manager—U.S. sales in 1983 and vice president—U.S. sales in 1984.

Levine, who has been director of sales operations since March, 1984, joined AMC in 1971 and has held several sales, leasing and advertising posts at the zone and corporate levels. He was named Denver zone manager in 1982.

Tucker has served as manager of AMC's Northeast region since June, 1985. Before that, he was New York zone manager. He also spent three years in the company's international operations.

With Corvette and Fiero experience, GM is the leader

More plastic body panels due

Continued from Page 14

ment for DiversiTech General, Akron, said an SMC hood may use two molds (for an inner and outer panel), compared with 12 stamping presses for steel.

A disadvantage with SMC is that is may take three minutes to mold the hood, compared with 15 to 20 seconds to stamp it. On a run of 400,000 units, that is a considerable difference.

Reinker said, "A run of 400,000 cars with SMC hoods could use four different styles of hoods."

He also noted that the cycle time to mold SMC is decreasing. The estimate is it will take one third the time to mold a component by 1990.

Another advantage of SMC is the minimal waste material involved in molding a part.

On large body panels involving cutouts, such as van liftgates, it is often more practical to use SMC. Although waste SMC can't be recycled, there is usually little waste.

"The average Ford Bronco II owner doesn't realize that the liftgate is made of SMC," Reinker said.

Thermoplastics, which are injected into a mold under high heat and pressure, are not as stiff as SMC, but they can be molded about twice as fast as SMC.

Thermoplastics are better suited to vertical panels; the rear quarter panel of the Fiero is an example.

Sources indicate that Buick's 1987 front-wheel-drive LeSabre, the mid-1987 GM33 luxury two-seater and the 1988 or 1989 front-drive Electra will use injection molded thermoplastic fenders.

The likely material is produced by General Electric Plastics Group, Pittsfield, Mass., and is called Noryl GTX.

A GE spokesman claimed that Noryl GTX can withstand temperatures up to 300 degrees Fahrenheit and can be painted on an assembly line along with metal parts.

Applying an equal amount of paint to different materials on an assembly line has been a problem. Fiero body panels, which use several different types of plastic, are painted together off-line and then hung on the frame.

Purcell, of Budd, said, "There are a lot of assembly plants with systems set up to handle steel body panels in place. When you directly substitute a plastic panel, for example an SMC hood, and run it through an electrocoat paint dip where the paint is drawn to the metal, you might not get as much paint on the hood because the plastic is not a conductor."

The bumpers on the Ford Taurus/Sable line and the Aerostar are made of a GE thermoplastic called Xenoy. Plastic was chosen, according to the GE spokesman, because it can be molded in a shape not possible with metal.

Experts in the industry agree that there is no single plastic superior to all others in all instances.

RRIM, a material which chemically reacts and hardens in the mold, is another widely used plastic. It has the advantage of lower mold pressures and heat, but it requires further preparation out of the mold.

Composites may also gain a place in the industry. Molded Fiberglass Co., Ashtabula, O., for example, is experimenting with a plastic/balsa wood composite which looks promising.

Used Car Sales
Auction Averages

Dec. 1985	$4,559
Month ago	$4,714
Year ago	$4,308

Model Breakdown
Auction Averages

	DEC. 1985	NOV. 1985	OCT. 1985
1985	$9,839	$9,989	$9,706
1984	$6,514	$6,690	$6,891
1983	$5,594	$5,820	$6,047
1982	$4,507	$4,752	$4,870
1981	$3,474	$3,543	$3,591
1980	$2,694	$2,738	$2,896
1979	$2,207	$2,254	$2,404
1978	$1,646	$1,696	$1,765
Overall Average	$4,559	$4,714	$4,759

Fields is hall of famer

PHOENIX.—Lucky Fields of Ray Tanner Volvo has become the 25th member of the Volvo Hall of Fame.

Modern forms broad-based technical unit

WARREN, Mich.—Modern Engineering Service Co. has formed a new division with the resources to take an automotive program from concept to production. The resources of the new division, which has the interim name of Modern 2000, will be in addition to those of Modern's present engineering and prototype departments.

Modern said the division will have closely linked departments for creative design, product and manufacturing engineering and prototype services including computer-integrated manufacturing.

Modern is also building a design center in Troy, Mich., which will fall under the command of the new division. The design center will be a high-tech facility for conceptual design and modeling in clay and other forms.

Modern also announced that its Product Engineering and On-Site Divisions will be restructured by eliminating, where possible, the line which currently distinguishes product off-site from on-site work.

The new organization is also more closely aligned to General Motors' new platform and product development groups. Modern said the changes will allow it to better serve its customers.